LOS ALTOS HILLS CALIFORNIA

Los Altos Hills

TOWN NEWSLETTER

Volume XXV No. 4 December 2002

CALENDAR

Happy Holiday!

We wish all of the residents of the Town a safe Happy Holiday Season and a Happy New Year!

December 14 - 1-4 PM; Olde Fashioned Holiday Crafts for all at Town Hall; (See story page 5.) All children & parents invited!

December 17 - Tuesday, 7 PM; Caroling Event at Town Hall, Warm refreshments.(See story on page 5.) All residents invited!

January 18, 19, Sat. 10 AM- 3 PM & Sun.12 - 3 PM, Friends of the Library Used Book Sale, Hillview Community Ctr., Info. 948--7683 x3519

February 1, Sat., Crab Feed & Auction. Hillview Comm. Ctr. Social Hall. $50 per person. Info.: 949-8653

Ongoing : Free Mediation Services. Los Altos Mediation Program. Info: 949-5267

To Be Or Not To Be —

To Underground Or Not To Underground

That Is The Question

Few Los Altos Hills residents love the 50 or so miles of unsightly, dangerous utility wires and poles that mar our Town. (As recently as October 2002 a fire was started in Town by downed power wires!)

However, years of study by Town committees and Council have not resulted in elimination of these wires...or even an accepted plan for such a project.

Photos by Joce Couperus

Preserve the Beauty of Our Hills: What do you prefer? With or without utility poles? (View at the corner of Viscaino and La Cresta Drive)

However, help may be on the way. The community has spoken loud and clear about their interest in saving Open Space and maintaining our rural ambience. There is no question that residents want to preserve the beauty of our landscape.

No matter how we look at the problem, it basically boils down to money and the energy to deal with the problem on the part of our residents.

On the down side, some view the cost as prohibitive. At around $15,000 to $20,000 per home, many residents are not willing to spend their money on the project — and especially those residents who live on fixed incomes or on streets that are already undergrounded.

The $15,000 to $20,000 is the amount to bring the wires to the property line; however, many more homes in Town have the wires underground between the street and the home than on their street or at edge of a lot.

The cost estimate applies to any home not having undergrounding at this time. In the proposal recently provided, neighborhoods not already done will pay for undergrounding. This occurs because the only neighborhoods that would apply for undergrounding would be ones that are not presently undergrounded.

What to do?

We can look to the Town of Tiburon for guidance. Tiburon just this year completed the "Stewart Drive Undergrounding Assessment District" project, which resulted in the undergrounding of wires serving 87 homes. It took many years to complete. The homeowners paid $15,800 each for the project, but the Town handled much of the administration, including arranging for financing for homeowners who needed it.

A proposal was previously before the LAH City Council, and will be reintroduced soon, that would create the opportunity for projects similar to the "Stewart Drive" project, but with one very significant difference, namely that our Town would pick up part of the cost of the projects, say 50%, as an incentive.

Each neighborhood project would occur on a first-come-first-served basis.

Why Not Let PG&E Do It?

While it is tempting say, "Just let PG&E and PacBell handle this problem," due to financial problems that just isn't going to happen. It appears that with prudent fiscal management, the Town can afford it

To Be Or Not To Be?

We will soon find out whether LAH undergrounding is "to be or not to be." Will our community have the will to actually do it? In order to implement such a plan, it will take neighborhood leadership.

A new plan will be discussed and refined for presentation to the residents in the future by the new City Council. In the meantime, you are invited to visit the following website to gain an understanding about how the City of Tiburon approached undergrounding so successfully: *http://home.earthlink.net/~victorz/*

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Update on SBC Pacific Bell DSL Project

SBC Pacific Bell recently reduced their non-management workforce by 2,300 employees, the effect of which is unknown on Santa Clara County. It is our understanding that they are reducing in the areas with the least demand. The reasons given for this reduction are due to the regulatory environment and downturn in the economy. The CPUC rendered a decision in May 2002, which lowered the prices SBC, can charge their competitors for access to their network. SBC External Affairs Director has advised that they "met their commitments for DSL deployment in Los Altos Hills in 2002 and are ahead of schedule." The 2003 build schedule is unknown at this time but should be announced early in the first quarter of 2003.

City Manager Maureen Cassingham

Town-wide Emergency Preparedness Training

The Town's first collaborative emergency preparedness training of our residents occurred on October 2, 2002 with the assistance of the Palo Alto Chapter of the American Red Cross. Over forty citizens attended the hour and a half session with positive feedback and suggestions. The next training was attended by 32 residents and was held at Bullis School on November 12. Again, the training session received a positive response. Based on the change in composition of the audience, the Bullis program was more focused on family preparedness and child safety in the event of a disaster. Fliers were sent to homes via the students and the Town's emergency email database was used to promote the second session.

There will be future Emergency Preparedness training sessions for the residents.

Update on County-wide Radio/Data Interoperability Project

The Communications Steering Committee for this very important project recently reported on its status to the Santa Clara County City/County Managers Association. Specifically, the Committee has recommended securing the services of a full-time Project Manager/Systems Integrator to move this project forward at this critical juncture. Attempting to make further progress using in-house staff as a collateral assignment is not workable due to competing priorities. Contractual assistance can be funded within the project's current budget. The "black box" solution to radio interoperability has been rethought in favor of using an approach which combines some patches to our existing systems in the County with some operational guideline changes. Some project dollars may be spent to enhance existing radio equipment to improve current systems and maximize interoperable communications.

Appointment of New City Clerk

Effective November 4, 2002, Karen Jost joined the Town Staff as City Clerk replacing Pat Dowd, who retired after 23 years of service to Los Altos Hills.

—Maureen Cassingham, City Manager

POLLUTION PREVENTION KEEPS OUR LOCAL CREEKS AND WETLANDS HEALTHY

A watershed is a land area that drains into a creek, river, lake, wetland, bay, or groundwater aquifer. In Santa Clara Valley, all the water from rain and irrigation which flows over the land surface (called runoff) goes into storm drains, creeks and rivers that flow directly to San Francisco Bay.

Here are easy ways to prevent watershed pollution:

1. Control erosion around your property to prevent dirt and debris from being carried into the storm drain. Erosion is the washing away of soil by rain in the rainy season.

2. Find some alternative ways to control pests inside and outside your home, without toxic chemical pesticides. If you do use pesticides, use them sparingly and according to the directions specified on the container. Do not use outside if rain is forecast within 24 hours. Take unwanted pesticides to a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event.

3. If you change your own oil, recycle the waste oil at the curb or take it to a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event. Regularly maintain your car to avoid leaks of auto fluids. Never pour oil or other automotive fluids into a storm drain or onto the ground.

4. Clean up trash outside your home. Pick up leaves and yard clippings and recycle as green waste. If you see litter, pick it up and put it in a trash can.

5. Wash your car on an unpaved area or better yet, take it to a commercial car wash.

6. Pick up your pet droppings and dispose of them in the trash or in your toilet.

7. Use kitty litter or other absorbent materials - not your hose - to clean up spills and leaks on paved surfaces. Remember to clean up and properly dispose of the used absorbent.

8. Rinse latex paint brushes, pans and rollers in the sink. Filter and reuse oil-based paint thinner or brush cleaners. Take leftover latex and oil-based paints and solvents to a hazardous waste collection event. Never pour paint or solvents into storm drain, sink or onto the ground.

9. Divert rainspouts and garden hoses away from paved surfaces to prevent water from carrying pollutants directly into storm drains. Provide landscaping next to sidewalks and driveways to collect runoff from paved surfaces.

By protecting the watershed, creeks and the Bay, we are protecting the environment for our children and future generations.

—Richard D. Chen, Associate Engineer

For Council Agenda and Minutes, See our Website: www.losaltoshills.ca.gov

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Town Planning Department approvals for new development since August 2002 through November 2002, include the following: five new residences approved through the Fast Track review process, six secondary units, two additions, four pools and three landscape screening plans. The Planning Commission reviewed the following: four new single family residences, three subdivisions of land, one conditional use permit, two variance requests, two lot line adjustments, one landscape plan, one new driveway. The Planning Commission voted to recommend that the City Council approve the 2002 Master Path Plan. The Commission also revoked a previously approved variance and site development permit in response to the unauthorized demolition of an existing home. In the coming weeks, the Planning Commission will begin studying ways to reduce the incidence of tall or dense vegetation blocking views on surrounding properties.

Planning Director Carl Cahill

Back in early September, a Secondary Housing Unit Survey was distributed to Town residents as part of the 2002 Housing Element update. This survey was last conducted in 1994. The survey helps document the effectiveness of the Town's secondary housing unit program in meeting the Town's regional share of affordable housing needs. As of November 1, 2002, the Planning Department has received over 1,200 returned surveys. We wish to thank all those who took their time to complete the survey. The survey results will be tabulated and incorporated into the revised Housing Element and sent to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for review.

—Carl Cahill, Planning Director

Emergency Management Plan

The Town's Emergency Plan was adopted by City Council at their November 21, 2002 meeting. Town Staff has received introductory training on the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) with training on the use of the Town's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to follow. Terry Gitlan, Director of Emergency Services for Santa Clara County, will provide Town staff with tabletop exercises following EOC training. The City Manager wishes to maintain a consistent training schedule to ensure Town staff is well prepared in the event of a disaster.

—Steve Garcia, Code Enforcement Officer

Welcome to Our New City Clerk

If getting organized is the hallmark of a great city clerk, then Karen Jost is destined for great success as Los Altos Hills' new city clerk. In her first few weeks of service, she has already organized a successful recognition dinner for her predecessor for 104 people, administered the November 5th election, and received the Citizens' Open Space Initiative that must be delivered in a timely manner to the County Registrar of Voters.

Karen Jost, City Clerk

Karen, a long time valley resident who lives in the unincorporated area of Los Altos Hills, assumed the almost impossible task of replacing highly admired and respected former city clerk, Pat Dowd. Pat recently retired after 23 years of service.

The role of the city clerk is central to the conduct of Municipal Government. They are *highly* visible and yet must be neutral in a *highly* political environment. The city clerk's role is dictated by the State of California, city charters and by local law. Karen is responsible in part for maintaining the legislative history of the Town. (That means actions taken at the council meetings by elected officials.) Additional responsibilities include conducting municipal elections, processing initiatives, referendums, recall petitions and to perform recruitment for board and commission members. In addition, city clerks are legal publications, records and Brown Act experts.

Karen grew up in the Willow Glen area of San Jose and attended San Jose State University, majoring in the Social Sciences. In the past 30 years she has combined raising a family with volunteer services by serving on the West Valley Paralegal Advisory Board and for the past 9 years served as Fire Commissioner for the Los Altos Hills County Fire District representing the unincorporated area of Los Altos Hills.

Karen's past experience includes being an entrepreneur - starting Windfall Associates, a public relations firm that she ran for 10 years. Prior to applying for the position of City Clerk, Karen enjoyed broad past experience in working in different departments in LAH Town Hall - for example, substituting in the LAH Planning Department when Lani Smith was on extended leave, working as an assistant to the Public Works Director and Office Manager. The experience provided great background of Town systems and policies. Nonetheless, Karen states, "My biggest challenge is trying to acquire all of the knowledge and history that Pat Dowd gained in her many years of service to the Town."

Judging by how efficiently Karen handled her first big challenge of receiving the Citizen's Open Space Initiative with over 1240 residents' signatures - there is little doubt that Karen will rise to the level our great city clerk of the past. Please join us in extending a warm welcome to Karen.

Appointment of A New Town Hall Committee

Residents Invited To Apply

The City Council of the Town of Los Altos Hills invites applications from interested residents to serve on the recently created New Town Hall Committee. Seven residents will be appointed by the Council at the December 19, 2002 Meeting. Applications can be obtained at Town Hall, from the Town website: http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov under "Job Opportunities" or by phone (650) 941-7222.

Applications will also be available at the City Council Meeting of December 19, 2002.

TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS

Community Volunteers Needed

Town Standing Committees (Four Year Terms)

(Environmental Design & Protection, Finance/Investment, Parks & Recreation, and Information & Safety)

North County Library Authority

Youth Commissioner

Applications are available at Town Hall, 26379 Fremont Road, Los Altos Hills, California 94022 during regular office hours (8:00 a.m. to noon; 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.). For additional information, please call the City Clerk at 941-7222, ext. 226.

Town Newsletter - Statement of Purpose

To communicate current issues, services, and activities in Los Altos Hills to the residents of the Town and to facilitate, encourage and improve interaction between the residents and Town government. The 2002 Newsletter will be published quarterly in the months of March, June, September, and December. Deadline for the next issue is January 31, 2003.

Internet Address: www.losaltoshills.ca.gov

About Our Publication

The Town Newsletter is published with assistance from our Town Volunteer Committees.

Editor: Dorothy Duffy Price

Associate Editors: Barbara Lamparter, Linda Seidel, Karen Emerzian

Los Altos Hills City Council

• Robert Fenwick, Mayor • Emily Cheng , Mayor Pro Tem

• Breene Kerr • Mike O'Malley •Dean Warshawsky

Recycled Paper

(Ed. Note: The City Council offered the following resolution to the Los Altos School District on Monday, December 9, 2002. The resolution is printed below so that Hills residents remain informed of council actions in support of the continued operation of an elementary school in Los Altos Hills.)

RESOLUTION NO. 113-02
A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS IN SUPPORT OF THE CONTINUED OPERATION OF BULLIS-PURISSIMA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN LOS ALTOS HILLS

WHEREAS, the Town of Los Altos Hills considers the Bullis-Purissima Elementary School a priceless asset and treasure of the community of Los Altos Hills; and

WHEREAS, the Los Altos School District maintains only one public school serving K-6 school children residing in the Town of Los Altos Hills; and

WHEREAS, the academic excellence, enrollment and parent involvement have consistently distinguished the Bullis-Purissima Elementary School and the entire Los Altos Hills Community; and

WHEREAS, the continued presence and operation of Bullis-Purissima Elementary School in Los Altos Hills which has so ably educated generations of the Town's children is vital to the family life of current and future Town residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the Town does hereby convey its support for maintaining a public school in Los Altos Hills and opposes any action by the Los Altos School District leading to the closure of Bullis-Purissima Elementary School.

REGULARLY PASSED AND ADOPTED this 5th day of December, 2002.

–Signed by Mayor and full Council

Farewell Pat - Thanks for the Memories!

Pat Dowd, recently retired LAH City Clerk is greeted by Dan Alexander, former President of the Purissima Water District Board and long time community volunteer at her recognition dinner held on November 8th at the Fremont Hills Country Club. The party was attended by over 100 friends.

Summer in the Hills 2003 — CAMPS!! CAMPS!! CAMPS!!

LAH Parks and Recreation Committee in conjunction with LAH Recreation Programs is gearing up for a fun summer of recreation camps.

Offered for Summer 2003:

Skyhawks Sports Camps

Multi-Sport Camp — Ages 7 to 14
June 23 -27 9:00 am to 3:00pm

Minihawks — Ages 4 to 7
June 23-27 9:00 am to 12:00 pm
July 7-11 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Basketball — Ages 7 to 14
July 14-18 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Soccer — Ages 6 to 14
July 21-25 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Flag Football —Ages 7 to 9
July 7-11 9:00 to 12:00

Flag Football — Ages 10-12
July 7-11 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Basketball — Ages 6 to 12
August 4-8 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Beginning Golf — Ages 5 to 8
August 18-22 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Beginning Golf — Ages 9 to 11
August 18-22 1:00pm to 4:00 pm

WESTWIND HORSE CAMP — TBA 8:30 am to 12:30 pm

Introduction to riding and horse care for ages 7 to 12. This year we will offer two 1-week sessions. Taught by British Horse Society and Pacific Ridge Pony Club instructor Ms. Jenny Whitworth.

OHLONE CAMP — TBA Ages 7 to 10

Nature hikes, Ohlone Native American folklore, crafts and outdoor games. This year we will offer two 1-week sessions. Taught by California State Parks Ohlone Cultural Docent Ms. Mariann Booth.

On-line registration for Skyhawks Sports Camps will be available March 10 at www.skyhawks.com under Los Altos Hills.

Applications for Westwind Horse Camps and Ohlone Camps can be downloaded starting March 1 from the Los Altos Hills Website www.losaltoshills.ca.gov under Parks & Rec.

Applications for all camps will be available at Town Hall starting March 1.

For camp updates, questions, and information contact hermelinde@aol.com or call 650-941-7222. Thank you!

PATHWAYS REPORT

Caroling in the Hills

Mark Your Calendars!

All residents of Los Altos Hills are invited to participate in the 3rd Annual Holiday Caroling Party on Tuesday, December 17, 2002. Members of the Community Relations Committee will provide treats in the Town Hall at 7:00 PM, where participants are encouraged to gather and observe the gingerbread houses, which were made by children in a special holiday class sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Committee. Following a brief warm-up of voices and holiday spirit, the carolers will follow paths to many nearby homes for surprise holiday music. The evening will conclude with warm refreshments at Town Hall. Join with your neighbors in bringing fun holiday cheer to the neighborhoods. All residents of the town are invited to join their neighbors for a wonderful evening of friendship and song.

—Nancy Ewald, Member
Pathways Committee

HOLIDAY EVENT

Saturday, December 14, 1- 4PM

Come One, Come All to the Old Towne Hall for an Old Fashioned Holiday event for both big and small. Crafts and good eating, Irish Christmas Carols sung live for all to hear. Come and share the Holiday cheer.

Geared for the young and young-at-heart, come share the holiday spirit with your Hills neighbors and try your hand at ornament making, cookie decorating (and eating) and other fun crafts and games. Holiday refreshments provided.

Please RSVP so we can make sure we have enough craft materials and treats for all. E-mail your name, phone number, and number attending to hermelinde@aol.com or call 650-941-7222.

ADMISSION: 1 new toy or new or used children's book (in good condition) to be donated to charity.

–Event is sponsored by the LAH Parks and Recreation Committee and the non-profit LAH Recreation Programs.

Official November City Council Election Results

Breene Kerr	2,509	(65%)
Dean Warshawsky	2,410	(63%)
Bill Kerns	1,005	(26%)
Janet Vitu	1,003	(26%)
Steve Hubbell	131	(3%)

No. of Registered Voters = 5480
Ballots Cast = 3832
Turnout = 70%

ELECTION DAY VOTE

RESIDENT'S REPLY CARD

Let's Hear What You Think

1. Are your neighborhood utility wires underground now? Yes____No___

2. If not, would you consider becoming a member of an assessment district for undergrounding? Yes___ No____

3. Would you be willing to pay: $5000_____$10,000_____$15,000_____$20,000_____ $25,000_____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

Name: _____

Address: _____

*Phone / e-mail:*_____

Please use this card or answer on a separate sheet. Send your responses to Town Hall, 26739 Fremont Rd. LAH, CA 94022 or Fax: 650/941-3160

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Largest Pumpkin Grown In California

Pictured above is Olivia and her 889-pound pumpkin, Buttercup grown right here in LAH. Buttercup won the 1st Class prize for the largest California Grown Pumpkin at the Salinas, CA Fall Pumpkin Festival. Vince Zunino, Olivia's father is a champion pumpkin grower and urban farmer who lives on Ascension Drive in Los Altos Hills. Each one of the Zunino's three children get their very own pumpkin to nurture and watch grow. This year Olivia's Champion, Buttercup received $3600 in prize money for being the biggest in California. Pretty nice Trick or Treat prize!

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